IT IS DECIDED THEN
IKUTAROU, YOU WILL BE THE ONE TO DO IT
WAIT
PLEASE WAIT A SECOND!
YOU'RE ASKING ME TO LOOK INTO A CASE ON BEHALF OF AN OIRAN?
THAT'S CRAZY!

Chapter 2 The Chick Hears the Caged Bird's Song (Part 2)

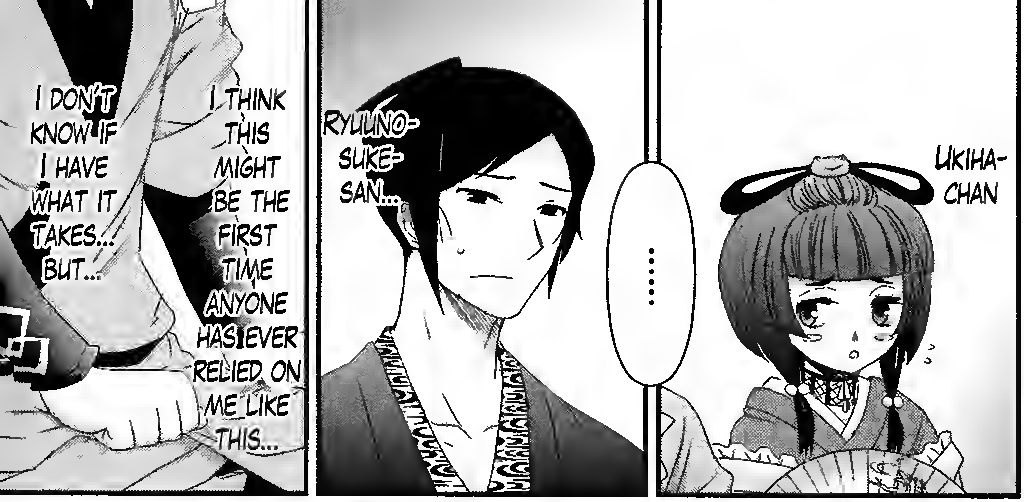
THIS ISN'T SOMETHING I CAN DO AT ALL...

THERE'S NO WAY I WOULD HAVE ANY SKILLS
I AM JUST A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING WHO CAN'T EVEN DO THE SIMPLEST THINGS
SOMEONE LIKE ME ...
HAHA...

USE THAT "SKILL"
YOU HAVE

SKILL?
WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT?

AND THERE YOU GO BECOMING TIMID AGAIN ...
ADAA ...
ぽこーん!
OOOH... OH
KUU ...
HAVE YOU EVER ONCE TRIED SEEING
WHETHER THERE IS MORE TO YOU OR NOT?


I DON'T KNOW IF I HAVE WHAT IT TAKES... BUT...
I THINK THIS MIGHT BE THE FIRST TIME ANYONE HAS EVER RELIED ON ME LIKE THIS...
RYUUNO-SUKE-SAN...
.....
UKIHA-CHAN

.....
ALL RIGHT ...
I DON'T KNOW HOW FAR I WILL GET BUT I WILL GIVE IT A TRY

THA... THANK YOU SO MUCH!
ALL RIGHT
I KNEW YOU WOULD SAY YES

YOU WILL BE FINE, IKUTAROU-SAN! I GUARANTEE IT!
EH... YOU THINK SO?

MAY I... GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE AS YOUR "SENPAI"?
THEN, LET'S START OFF BY CHECKING OUT THE CRIME SCENE TOMORROW MORNING!
I WILL TAKE YOU THERE!
AH, RIGHT
THE BASICS FOR SOLVING ANY MYSTERY ARE "HOUKOKU" (INFORMATION), "RENRAKU" (COMMUNICATION), "SOUDAN" (DISCUSSION) ...
OR "HOURENSOU" FOR SHORT!
トホア...

I WONDER WHAT "IMPETUOUS" MEANS...
"YOUNGSTERS"? JUST HOW OLD IS UKIHA-CHAN?
UH-HUH ...
THIS IS SOMETHING MANY OF THE "YOUNGSTERS" NOWADAYS HAVEN'T LEARNED YET!
THEY ARE JUST TOO IMPETUOUS.

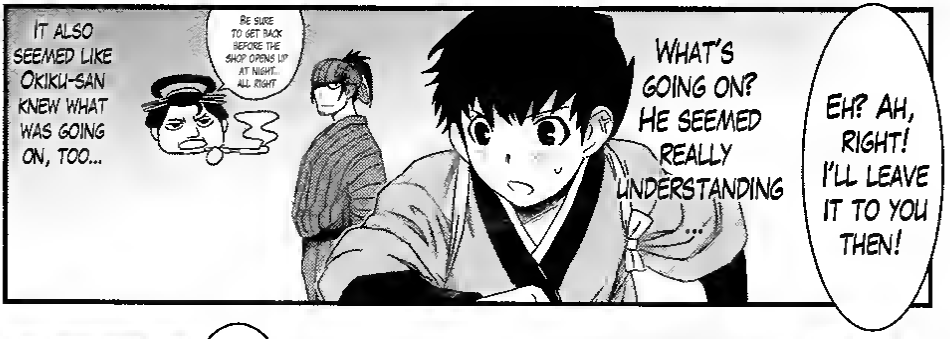
YOSHIWARA MAIN GATE - MORNING
GAAHAA-HAAHAAAA
THIS TIME WAS SATISFYING AS WELL!

WE WILL BE SO SAD-NYAA...
WE WILL BE SO LONELY-NYAA...

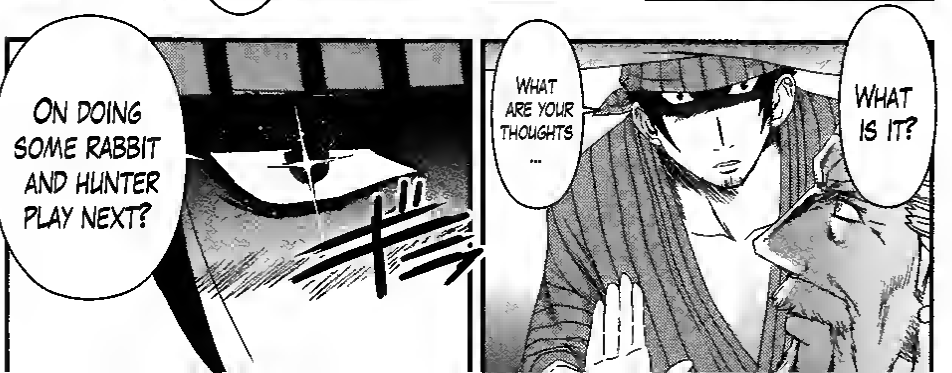
GAHAHAHA
WAAHAAHA! I'LL BE SURE TO COME BACK SOON!
SOMEONE'S ENERGETIC THIS MORNING

RETIRED MASTER OF SAKAEYA-NYAN!
WAKAUME-TAN!
COME BACK SOON, NYAN... WAKAUME... WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU-NYAAAA...

UM...
KOTETSU-SAN... TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I'LL BE
AAH
YOU'RE GOING ON THAT OIRAN'S ERRAND, RIGHT?
I'LL SWITCH WITH YOU SO GET GOING ALREADY!


EH? AH, RIGHT! I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU THEN!
WHAT'S GOING ON? HE SEEMED REALLY UNDERSTANDING ...
BE SURE TO GET BACK BEFORE THE SHOP OPENS UP AT NIGHT... ALL RIGHT
IT ALSO SEEMED LIKE OKIKU-SAN KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON, TOO...

OH, WAIT MOMENT, RETIRED MASTER!


WHAT IS IT?
WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ...
ON DOING SOME RABBIT AND HUNTER PLAY NEXT?

KILL ME- PYON
PLE... PLEASE DON'T
HMMM?!
GUHUHU...
THEN IN EXCHANGE, I WILL...
YOU ARE... NOT BAD AT AAAAALL!
OH WOOOW
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE LAST FELT THE EXCITEMENT OF THIS PLACE!
ざわ
ざわ

I HAVEN'T BEEN OUT OF YOSHIWARA SINCE I BECAME AN APPRENTICE, HUH...
御菓子
…!
I WONDER IF MUKOUJIMA'S MOM
AND YOSHIJIROU FROM MY RELATIVE'S HOUSE ARE DOING OKAY ...
ぱん
THERE IS NO END OF FILTH HERE IN YOSHIWARA ...
ALL RIGHT!
AS IF I'D LET MYSELF SINK IN ANY SWAMP!

NEE-SAMA-AAAA!
AH!
JUST WHAT SHOULD I DO IN ORDER TO QUICKLY GET BETTER AT THIS?
I ALWAYS END UP GETTING STUCK HERE...
IF YOU PRACTICE EVERY DAY UNTIL YOUR SKIN PEELS OFF
AND UNTIL YOU CAN HEAR THE SHAMISEN EVEN IN YOUR SLEEP YOU WILL HAVE PRACTICALLY MASTERED IT
AND IT WON'T TAKE LONG, YOU KNOW?
IT IS SIMPLE
!!!
LET ME SEE IT
I-I-I-I THINK I WOULD PREFER A LESS DRASTIC METHOD IF YOU PLEASE ...

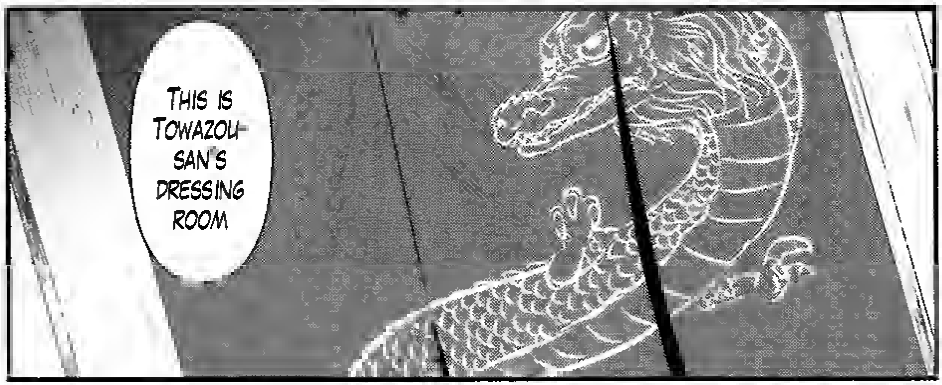
UKIHA... WILL DO HER BEST TO BECOME AS GOOD AS YOU!
……?
NEE-SAMA
そ…

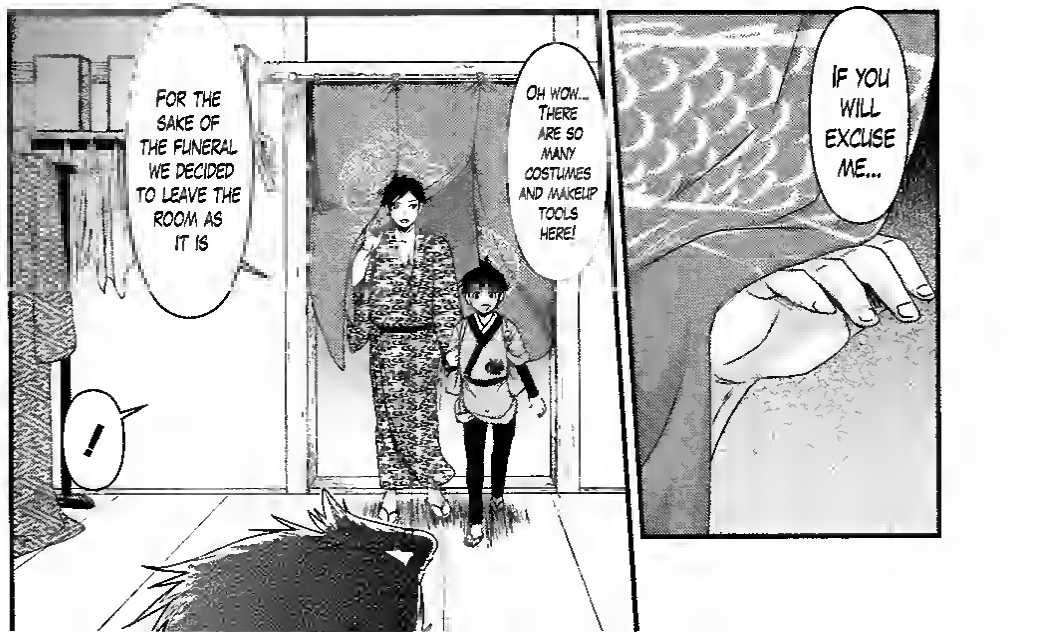
Come one, come all!
The actor who will be playing the lead role as the great thief in the much talked about "48 Police Girls of Akihabara"
Will be the younger brother of the master of the troupe... As well as the uncle of Towazou!!
That's right, "Odaka Hourai" will be playing the role in the afternoon and evening shows! Now, come on in!
Heeh. So they were able to find a substitute for the afternoon show, huh
Ikutarou-kun!
Over here
Ah, Ryuuno-suke-san

ガラ…

Good morning... There
All right, let's go.
179...
龍之助
Oh wow!
Amazing... Those actors playing women
Look even more feminine than the nee-sans at our place!

IT'S RYUUNOSUKE...
OI, I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S SHOWING UP LIKE THIS
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER


THIS IS TOWAZOU-SAN'S DRESSING ROOM


IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME...
OH WOW... THERE ARE SO MANY COSTUMES AND MAKEUP TOOLS HERE!
FOR THE SAKE OF THE FUNERAL WE DECIDED TO LEAVE THE ROOM AS IT IS
!

AH, RYUUNOSUKE-SAN
HE-HEY ...
SO YOU WERE HERE, KOROKU
カチ…
GOOD MORNING
ペコ
THIS IS KOROKU. HE WAS TOWAZOU-SAN'S ATTENDANT.
AND, UM, THIS IS IKUTAROU WHO IS A DISTANT RELATIVE OF MINE..
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU
TOWAZOU'S ATTENDANT ODAKA KOROKU

I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU ...

IKUTAROU-KUN WAS A BIG FAN OF TOWAZOU-SAN.
I'M SORRY TO BOTHER YOU AT A TIME LIKE THIS BUT COULD YOU ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS HE HAS?
SURE...

THAT'S RIGHT, I'M SUPPOSED TO ASK QUESTIONS ...

IS THAT... THE COSTUME THAT TOWAZOU-SAN DIED IN?

GO AHEAD
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK ME WHATEVER YOU LIKE
.....

I HAVE BEEN AN ATTENDANT FOR CLOSE TO 5 YEARS NOW
HAVE YOU BEEN AN ATTENDANT FOR LONG?
I HAVE TO DO WHAT I CAN!
IN ORDER TO BECOME AN ATTENDANT KOROKU HAD TO BEG TOWAZOU-SAN TO BE HIS ATTENDANT FOR THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS UNTIL TOWAZOU-SAN GAVE IN.
KOROKU IS FROM HIDA AND HAS ALWAYS ADMIRED ACTORS.
WHILE I WAS LIVING DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS IN MY VILLAGE THERE WAS A SINGLE POSTER OF AN ACTOR...
WOOOW...
THAT'S... AMAZING
I BETTER WRITE THIS DOWN...
ONCE I SAW IT I WAS DRAWN RIGHT IN...
AND NO MATTER HOW MUCH TIME PASSED I JUST COULD NOT GET IT OUT OF MY MIND ...

……
Towazou-san took such good care of me...
And yet why did this happen to him?

It looks like he really meant a lot to him, huh...

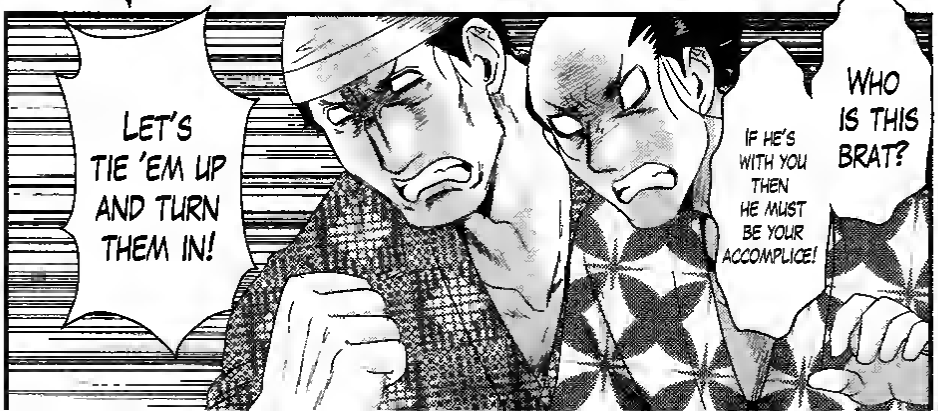
……

You got some nerve showing your face like this!
It true that Ryuunosuke is here?!

EEK!
I KNOW THAT YOU KILLED HIM...
O-OH, I SEE YOU'RE ALL HERE...
I-
RUMOR'S GOING AROUND THAT YOU POISONED THE POND BEFORE THE SHOW STARTED!
THERE'S NO WAY ANYONE WOULD DROWN IN A POND THAT SHALLOW
WHAT WAS THAT?
THERE ARE EVEN WITNESSES WHO CAN PROVE THAT!
I DIDN'T! I'M INNOCENT!

ヒュッ!!
TELL THEM, IKUTAROU!
NOW!
WAI...

WHA-
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, RYUUNOSUKE-SAN?!
WE ONLY JUST STARTED INVESTIGATING, DIDN'T WE?!
WE HAVEN'T EVEN FOUND ANY EVIDENCE OR WITNESSES YET!
EH?!
WEL... WELL COULD YOU PLEASE TELL THEM SOMETHING?!


WHO IS THIS BRAT?
IF HE'S WITH YOU THEN HE MUST BE YOUR ACCOMPLICE!
LET'S TIE 'EM UP AND TURN THEM IN!

YOU ARE IN THE DRESSING ROOM OF SOMEONE WHO HAS PASSED
PLEASE STOP THIS...
...
KEEP OUT OF IT, KOROKU!!
SHUT UP!
COULD YOU KNOCK IT OFF?!

CEASE WITH YOUR ACCUSATIONS!!
TOWAZOU'S DEATH WAS AN ACCIDENT!

But, Hourai-san!
Everyone's talking about how he killed him!
Shut your mouths!!
It happened on stage! If you have a problem with what happened on stage then settle it with your acting!
This is no matter to solve with muscle, am I right?!
Oooh! He's so cool!

RYUUNOSUKE ... COME TO MY DRESSING ROOM
UUU...

N... NOT AT ALL
SORRY FOR ALL THE RUCKUS ... KOROKU

[redacted]

HOURAI-SAN IS A REAL MAN AMONG MEN, HUH
IS HE TAKING HIS MAKEUP OFF?
THERE'S NO NEED TO THANK ME
I JUST SAID WHAT ANY ACTOR WOULD.
THANK YOU SO MUCH, HOURAI-SAN!

I JUST... DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ANYMORE...
……
BUT... IF THINGS GO ON LIKE THIS EVERYONE WILL THINK I AM A CRIMINAL...
OH YOU!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?! YOU HAVE TO KEEP IT TOGETHER!
VETERAN KABUKI ODAKA HOURAI
EH?

YO-
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S LIKE A "COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON" !!
YOU'RE LIKE A "COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON" !
SORRY ...
WHERE DID THAT COURAGE AND CHIVALRY YOU SHOWED ME ON STAGE GO?!

!
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, YOU'RE RIGHT!
YOU WENT INTO THE POND BEFORE TOWAZOU-SAN DID!
WHY AM I OKAY AFTER DOING THE NOON SHOW THAT DAY AND WENT INTO THE POND?
TO BEGIN WITH... IF YOU HAD POISONED THAT POND

AH... MY NAME IS IKUTAROU
I AM WORKING AT KAIKAROU IN YOSHIWARA ...

HHN... WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
WHOSE CHILD ARE YOU ?

EH?
HONESTLY, THAT GUY WAS HOPELESS
NO, I...
KAIKAROU? THAT'S A FIRST CLASS ESTABLISHMENT
NOW THEN, I'M GUESSING YOU'RE HERE TO COLLECT HIS DEBTS, HUH... HMM... I KNEW IT...
WHISPER
HOURAI-SAN'S OLDER BROTHER IS VERY STRICT WHEN IT COMES TO THE ARTS

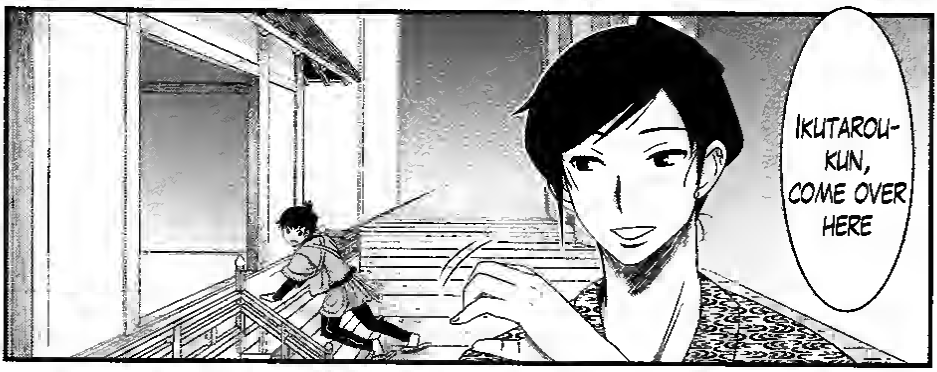
I SEE...
MASTER!
FOR TOWAZOU-SAN WHO LOVED TO PLAY AROUND HE WAS AGAINST INHERITING THE "GENGOROU" NAME.
OTOSE FROM MANTEN'S IS HERE TO SEE YOU!

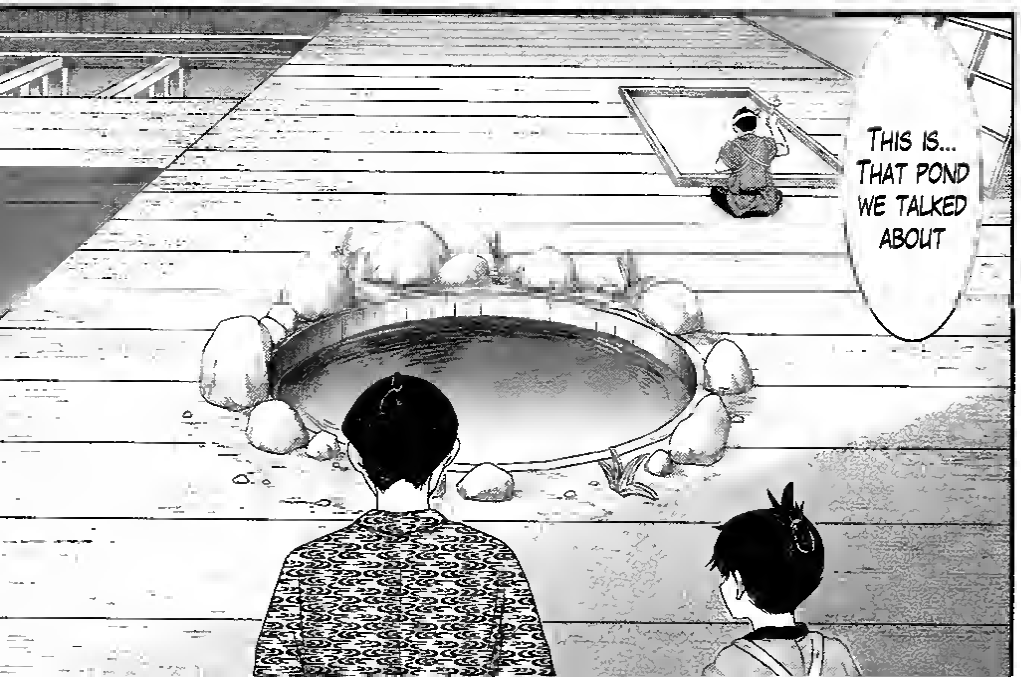
HEEEY, HOURAI-CHAAAAAN!!
YOU WERE GREAT TODAY, TOOOO!
I COULDN'T BE MORE SERIOUS! YOU WERE SUPER GOOD TODAY!
KYAAAA
OH MY, ARE YOU SERIOUS, OTOSE-CHAN?
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS ACT LIKE SUCH A SEXY HUNK ON STAGE?
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE REALLY LIKE AN OLD LADY
UHUHU
AHAHAHA-HAHA
IT'S A REAL MYSTERY. BUT, ANYWAY, YOU WERE JUST FAB-U-LOUS
HEY! AREN'T YOU BEING A LITTLE TOO HARSH?! BUT THAT'S REALLY FUNNY!
WHY DO I FEEL SO TENSE?

THAT WOMAN IS OTOSE-SAN.
SHE IS THE WIDOW OF THE ICE SELLER IN YOKOYAMACHO AND IS A DEVOTED PATRON OF HOURAI'S OLDER BROTHER.
AH, RIGHT, YOU HAVE THE EVENING SHOW AFTER THIS, RIGHT?
WELL HERE'S A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR YOU
OH MY, ICE!!
IT FEELS SO COOOOLD AND GOOOOD
I BROUGHT A LOT SO FEEL FREE TO BRING SOME TO ALL THE OTHER DRESSING ROOMS AND EVERYONE BACKSTAGE.
UHUHU

Ice is really expensive, isn't it?
Kyaaaa Uhuhuhu
Yes it is. Ice is brought all the way from the icehouses in Shinano and Kai to Edo where they freeze water in very deep wells during winter.
Then when summer comes along Otose brings us large amounts of ice to keep us cool during practice and afternoon performances ...
Oh wow
This is "the stage"
It's where I work.
カーン カーン
カーン…カーン…

タンタンタン…
HAHA…
THIS IS AMAZING, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU COULD MOVE RIGHT IN!
THIS IS JUST AWESOME!
キョロ キョロ
OH WOW!
IT'S SO BIG, HUH!


IKUTAROU-KUN, COME OVER HERE


THIS IS... THAT POND WE TALKED ABOUT

AND THE STAGE WATER THAT ACTORS SINK INTO IS CALLED "BREAK WATER"
IT'S CALLED "STAGE WATER"

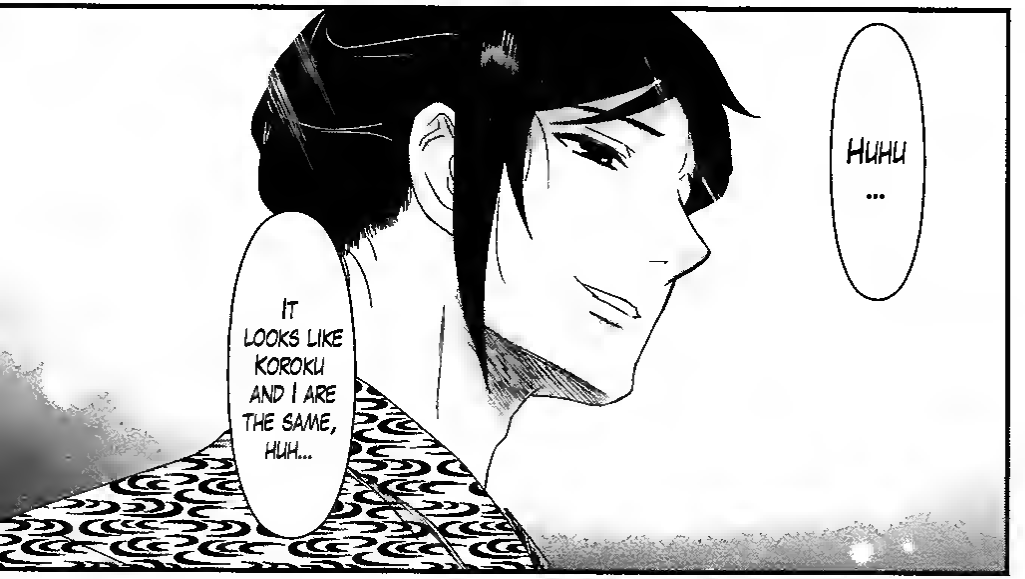
I'VE GOT TO SAY IT'S AMAZING HOW YOU'RE USING REAL WATER IN A PLAY.

THEN THERE'S ALSO "THE GHOST OF YOTSUYA" WITH ITS REVOLVING PANEL... AND THEN THERE'S "TOKUBEI OF INDIA: TALES OF STRANGE LANDS" !
AH! THERE'S THE "GHOST OF CHIBUSA ENOKI" WHERE IT HAS A VERY POWERFUL SCENE WHERE THE ACTOR STANDS IN A WATERFALL WHICH I HIGHLY RECOMMEND!
LET'S SEE, FAMOUS ONES ARE...
OF COURSE!
HEEH... ARE THERE OTHER PLAYS THAT USE STAGE WATER?

WHY DID YOU BECOME A KABUKI ACTOR, RYUUNOSUKE-SAN?
NOT AT ALL

SORRY FOR GETTING CARRIED AWAY...
AH...
THAT QUICK CHANGE WAS REALLY... SOMETHING

AND I JUST GOT LOST IN IT ...
IN ANY CASE, I JUST THOUGHT TO MYSELF, "I HAVE TO DO THIS!" ...
I WONDER THAT MYSELF SOMETIMES
WHY?


IT LOOKS LIKE KOROKU AND I ARE THE SAME, HUH...
HUHU ...

I HAVEN'T EVEN DECIDED ON ANYTHING YET, AFTER ALL...
AS I AM NOW... WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT... IS REALLY BEYOND ME, HUH
.....

I WONDER IF I'LL EVER FIND SOMETHING I CAN GET LOST IN...
EVEN IF I MAKE A MORE HONEST LIVING

!?
WHA-?!

TH... THE STRING SNAPPED ...
UKIHA?
KYAA!
DO YOU THINK... IKUTAROU-SAN IS OKAY?
NEE-SAMA ...
WHO CAN SAY ...
HE WILL PROBABLY END UP SINKING
UNLESS HE HAS "THE SKILL"

DEUS EX SCANS

OSHIGERINANSHI

CHAPTER 02
VOLUME 1

TRANSLATOR
GOTTERSTECHEN007

CLEANER REDRAWER
NJMANGA

PROOF-
GOTTERSTECHEN007

TYPESETTING
NJMANGA

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